

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-19 SS-20 NSC-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 USIE-00 EURE-00 INRE-00

H-03 DRC-01 /119 W

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2336

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T USNATO 5130

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: DATA ISSUE: TEXT OF UK PROPOSALS FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

1. UK DEL HAS JUST CIRCULATED A PAPER (TEXT BELOW) ON PUBLIC RELEASE OF DATA ON NATO AND WARSAW PACT FORCE LEVELS. ALTHOUGH UK REQUESTS DISCUSSION OF PAPER AT OCTOBER 26 SPC MEETING, AT U.S. REQUEST SPC WILL MEET ON OCTOBER 25. AT OCTOBER 25 MEETING, MISSION WILL PRESS AGAIN FOR EARLY AGREEMENT ON DATA, INCLUDING ON TANKS, AND WILL DRAW UPON STATE 210236 TO URGE EARLY PUBLIC RELEASE OF DATA. MISSION IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE DATE OF WORKING GROUP MEETING ON DATA FROM OCTOBER 30 TO OCTOBER 26. WE WILL THUS NEED BY TOMMORROW MORNING, OCTOBER 26, GUIDANCE REQUESTED USNATO 5098 AND FURTHER GUIDANCE REQUESTED SEPTTEL.

2. FULL TEXT OF UK PAPER FOLLOWS BELOW:

1. THERE HAS BEEN DISCUSSION IN THE AD HOC GROUP IN VIENNA OF HOW TO HANDLE ENQUIRIES FROM THE PRESS ON THE SUBJECT OF NATO AND WARSAW PACT FORCE LEVELS. IN THE VIEW OF MY
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AUTHORITIES, ALLIED DELEGATIONS WILL SOON NEED TO BE ABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE WARSAW PACT/NATO DISPARITIES WHEN BRIEFING THE PRESS. WITHOUT SUCH ILLUSTRATION, THE TASK OF BUILDING UP A CLEAR PICTURE IN THE PUBLIC MIND OF THE REAL CONVENTIONAL

DISPARITIES, TO REINFORCE OUR DEMAND FOR ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS WILL BE DIFFICULT. IN THE ABSENCE OF ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL THE PRESS WILL TEND TO BE UNCONVINCED AND SCEPTICAL.

2. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, WHETHER IT WOULD BE RIGHT TO RELEASE TO THE PRESS AGREED AND DETAILED FIGURES BEFORE THEY HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO THE WARSAW PACT IN NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WOULD TO SOME EXTENT PREJUDICE OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION. MOREOVER, WE MIGHT FIND IT NECESSARY TO REVISE OR REFINE FIGURES FOR NEGOTIATING PURPOSES. IF WE HAD ALREADY RELEASED THEM PREMATURELY, THE RUSSIANS WOULD POUNCE ON ANY DISCREPANCIES. THE PROBLEM WILL BE SIMPLIFIED ONCE WE HAVE TABLED FIGURES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. A SOLUTION FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS FOR THE TIME BEING MIGHT BE ENVISAGED ON THE FOLLOWING LINES:-

A. TO SPEAK IN BROAD TERMS, IE RATIOS RATHER THAN SPECIFIC FIGURES. FOR EXAMPLE, WE COULD SAY THAT THE TANK RATIO IN CENTRAL EUROPE IS APPROXIMATELY FOUR TO ONE OF FAVOUR OF WARSAW PACT. IT WOULD BE USEFUL (BUT NOT ESSENTIAL) IF WE COULD DEMONSTRATE HOW THE RATIOS MIGHT ALTER AFTER EXPECTED REINFORCEMENT FROM THE WESTERN SOVIET UNION. IN OUR VIEW, IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR BROAD AND AGREED RATIOS LIKE THIS TO BE PRODUCED BEFORE 30 OCTOBER, PERHAPS BY THE MBFR WORKING GROUP.

B. TO SAY THAT THE PRESS WILL NOT EXPECT US TO GIVE DETAILED FIGURES, BASED IN PART ON CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, BEFORE WE HAVE PUT THEM TO THE OTHER SIDE.

C. TO REFER THEM TO THE FIGURES IN "THE MILITARY BALANCE 1973-1974", PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES. THESE FIGURES, WE MIGHT SAY, DO NOT ENTIRELY COINCIDE WITH OUR OWN, BUT WE BELIEVE THE BROAD ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE TO BE RIGHT.

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4. IN DEALING WITH OUR OWN NATIONAL PRESS, WE (AND NO DOUBT OTHER COUNTRIES ALSO) WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO USE FIGURES WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY RELEASED OURSELVES, FOR EXAMPLE IN PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENTS. WE SHALL OF COURSE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THESE ARE NATIONAL FIGURES COMPATIBLE WITH ALLIANCE ESTIMATES.

5. WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF OUR ALLIES WERE IN A POSITION TO OFFER AT LEAST PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS AT THE SPC MEETING SCHEDULED TO BE HELD ON THE AFTERNOON OF FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER. THE MATTER IS OF COURSE OF SOME URGENCY, SINCE PRESS INTEREST WILL BE AT A MAXIMUM AT THE TIME OF THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS.

END TEXT
RUMSFELD

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